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fact were required, that Professor Langdell was a master of the art of legal exposition. In these articles he brought to bear his great powers of critical analysis and historical research upon a subject involved, so far as text writers were concerned, in such doubt, confusion and indefiniteness as to justify in some measure the observation of Selden that the rules of equity varied as the chancellor's foot. The result of his investigation was, that fundamental principles governing the exercise of equity jurisdiction were traced to their sources, their true scope and meaning ascertained, and what had hitherto been regarded as a heterogeneous collection of rules and maxims was reduced to an orderly and comprehensive system expressed in a style which is marvellously clear and concise, and at the same time comprehensive and illuminating.

Such a stimulating source for discussion and investigation could not fail to give rise to much critical examination of the author's theories, and to occasional differences of opinion on the part of teachers and writers, as is notably the case with the views expressed by Professor Langdell upon the subject of "equitable conversion" (p. 65) and specific performance of negative contracts.

The well thumbed volumes of the Harvard Law Review to be found upon the shelves of every library of significance, bear witness, however, to the extent to which these articles have been a constant source of inspiration to students and teachers alike, to say nothing of the occasional assistance which they afford to practitioners having some intricate problem of equity jurisprudence to solve. The republication of these articles, therefore, in some convenient form rendering them more accessible to the constantly increasing number of their readers, was much to be desired.

The present volume is strictly a reprint. Very little will be found in it which did not appear in the original articles as published in the Harvard Law Review. Not even a table of cases or an index is added to assist the reader who may wish to locate some special topic or trace some particular doctrine. The practical value of the book might also have been greatly enhanced by the judicious selection and addition of modern decisions, in which it is to be regretted many judges have not consistently followed the results reached by the author. It is believed these articles, carefully annotated by a competent authority in the manner indicated, would be unrivalled as an authoritative text and work of reference on the subject of equity jurisdiction, viewed both upon a theoretical and practical standpoint. It is earnestly to be desired that some one properly qualified by training, experience and native ability may be induced to undertake this work for some future edition, and that in any event future purchasers of the book may not be deprived of the mechanical aid of an index and a table of cases.

A TREATISE ON THE LAW OF WILLS. John R. Rood. Chicago, Ill.: Callaghan & Co. 1904. pp. lxvi, 635.

An attempt to summarize all the law of the passing of property from the dead to the living is made in a treatise on wills, including gifts *causa mortis*, with a summary of the law of descent, distribution and administration, by John R. Rood. An effort to explain thoroughly the essentials of all of these topics, in a single volume of less

than six hundred pages, is an ambitious enterprise. Yet the author has attained to no small degree of success, and has produced a book with many excellent features.

The style is clear, forcible and pleasing. Many of the pages are adorned with a dry humor, which lightens up the subject. A striking illustration of this is in the following explanation of why none but natural persons make wills: "Only creditors attend the obsequies of corporations, they never leave orphans or widows to mourn at their funerals, and the Orphans' Courts have no jurisdiction to administer their estates." If any difficulty were to be noted in regard to the literary merits of the book, it would be found in an occasional ambiguity caused by the effort to condense much substance into small compass.

The black-letter summaries of the topics to be discussed are very accurate and evince great care in their preparation. They are so arranged as to give material aid to the student in understanding the scheme of the book. In addition to these, the "forecasts" and "retrospects," at the beginning of the chapters, are admirable for keeping the thought of the reader fully abreast of the discussion. The foot-note references to monographic notes in the various "reporter" systems must also prove of great service to any diligent student.

One especially valuable feature of the book is in the unbiased discussion of the reasons upon which are founded the rules and principles explained. Sometimes the reader wishes that these might have been more extended; but they are generally clear and exact, and uniformly full of good suggestions. These are carefully and adequately sustained, as a rule, by apt citations of cases, and the careful and successful grouping of the statutory law of the different states. The latter feature is pleasingly noticeable throughout the book. In the author's distinction between a will and a contract, his explanation of wills made for valuable consideration, his summary of the development of modern wills, his explanation of the fact that a will must dispose of property, and his form of will and description of its proper parts, he has shown particular care and precision.

The one feature of the work, which may impress some careful readers adversely, is its terseness,—amounting in some instances almost to epigram,—which one wishes could have been avoided by making the volume somewhat larger. This feature is particularly noticeable in the discussions of testamentary capacity of mind and restraints on testamentary freedom of will. Less than twelve pages are devoted to the former topic; and its treatment is thus made disproportionately short. If more space could have been given to these very important subjects, even though it were at the expense of some minor matters, it would have improved greatly the value of the treatise for both students and practitioners. A little more explanation at many points would materially aid the learner.

The volume, as a whole, is to be commended as a valuable contribution to the legal literature of wills, intestacies, gifts *causa mortis* and administration of decedents' estates.

THE ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF BUSINESS CORPORATIONS. By Walter C. Clephane, LL.M., St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Co. 1905. pp. xxvi., 246.